

# EL MORRO

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January 2009

## ***Feliz Navidad, Feliz Año Nuevo & Feliz Día de Reyes***



Marc McCormick

Fort Buchanan kicks off the holiday season with a Christmas Parade, activities for the kids and evening entertainment. Child, Youth & School Services Vejigantes won 1st place in the Xmas Parade contest. *Story & pictures on Pg. 10-11.*



*Person of the Year — Antilles High School Choir who gave unselfishly for practically every garrison and PR public event. Also, see people who visited and worked at Fort Buchanan.*  
**Page 10**



*Combined Federal Campaign was highlighted at Garrison Townhall; Army 3-D Prevention Program for Soldiers and employees during holiday season.*  
**Page 9**



Leo Martinez

*Chap. (Lt. Col.) Fr. Rafael Rodriguez retires and leaves behind a legacy of service to God and country that spans more than 50 years. Recalled to active duty to minister to Ft. Buchanan, he says his farewell to friends and colleagues on Page 4.*





# FROM THE COMMANDER:



**Col. Edwin C. Domingo**  
Garrison Commander

January 2009

Thanks to the  
Ft. Buchanan  
Family

The United States Army Garrison and Fort Buchanan wishes each and everyone a happy and prosperous 2009. Since assuming this post in June 2007, I have been awed and humbled by servicemembers whose strength and courage made a difference in everyone's lives.

We began the year 2008 with the repealing of the construction moratorium which enables us to start project constructions on Fort Buchanan. The signing of the Army Family Community Covenant with the leaders and members of the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico lets our Soldiers and their families know through the commitment of our leaders that they are not forgotten, that their sacrifices are not in vain and that legacy of freedom will live on.

In a joint effort with Antilles School, Department of Justice and The Red Ribbon Campaign, we celebrated the National Red Ribbon Campaign to show our commitment to a healthy, drug-free life and to raise public awareness and mobilizing communities to combat alcohol,

tobacco and other drug use.

A well-known Puerto Rican entertainer, Melina Leon, entertained our troops and veterans during the Armed Forces Day as well as those valiant men and women in uniform around the world. We thanked her for her thrilling and excellent performance.

Our civilian force continues to provide excellent Common Levels of Support to Fort Buchanan and also the Army Reserve Centers in Puerto Rico.

As we look to 2009 and beyond, my personal goal is work toward keeping Fort Buchanan relevant and fulfilling our strategic vision and increasing our support to the Army Families and commitment to the principles of the Army Family Covenant.

Muchas gracias a nombre de todos los soldados del Ejercito de los Estados Unidos- activos, reservistas y guardia nacionales de Puerto Rico and on behalf of Fort Buchanan Command and Staff, we wish everyone a safe and prosperous 2009. Thank you very much for what you do to keep the ARMY STRONG!!

**The Fort Buchanan Mission —**  
Enable customers to succeed by providing sustainable Base Support and excellent services.

## Army Family Covenant

We recognize the commitment and increasing sacrifices that our families are making every day.

We recognize the strength of our Soldiers comes from the strength of their families.

We are committed to providing Soldiers and Families a Quality of Life that is commensurate with their service.

We are committed to providing our families a strong, supportive environment where they can thrive.

We are committed to building a partnership with Army Families that enhances their strength and resilience.

We are committed to improving Family readiness by —

- Standardizing and funding existing family programs and services.

- Increasing accessibility and quality of health care.

- Improving Soldier and Family housing.

- Ensuring excellence in schools, youth services and child care.

- Expanding education and employment opportunities for Family members.

## Army Community Covenant

*We the Community recognize —*

- The commitment Soldiers and their families are making every day.

- The strength of our Soldiers comes from the strength of their families.

- The strength of families is supported by the strength of the Community..

- The strength of the Community comes from the support of Employers, Educators, Civic and Business leaders, and its citizens.

*We the Community are committed to —*

- Building partnerships that support the strength, resilience and readiness of Soldiers and their families.

- Assisting in the implementation of the Army Family Covenant.



**CSM David Davis**  
Fort Buchanan  
Command Sgt. Maj.

The New Year is upon us and great things are just around the corner. We survived another year, weathered the storm and preserved. Some of us kept our resolu-

tions others gave up after a few, um, hours or days. Like last year this year we will most likely be vowing put away some money, lose weight, quit smoking, stick to a budget, find a better job, buy a better car, become more organized, pass the APFT, be more tolerant, be more loving or just eat better.

New Year's resolutions have been around for some 4,000 years, ever since the Babylonians began celebrating the start of the new planting season. And, they sure knew how to ring in the New Year for they'd party for days on end with each day enthusiastic dedicated to a different theme. The most common promises then was to return borrowed farm equipment and pay

off old debts; starting when they sobered up, of course.

For those who have studied mythology, if the Roman god Janus were around today, I'm sure he'd have a thing or two to say about our need to make resolutions. You see Janus was the god of change, transition, and new beginnings. In fact the Romans named the first month of the year after him, hence January. Initially, Janus was a guardian and keeper of shrines, but later was embossed on Roman coinage as a way of spreading people good fortune in the New Year. Janus was an odd character having a face (or should I say faces) only a mother could love because, in fact he had two faces — one looking forward, the other



backward. This showed his talent (from his youthful guardian days) to watch both entrances and exits at the same time. But, symbolically, it signaled the need to balance our hopes for tomorrow with a realization of what happened in the days gone by. Now, I know your need for Roman mythology at this point in your day is fading fast but

stick with me for one more thought. And, that is this — that maybe Janus knows why so many resolutions are well, ancient history (no pun intended) come February? Could it be that we're only looking ahead — when we should be looking back in equal measure?

Instead of looking for new resolutions shouldn't we be looking at, say Old Year reflections?

What we do with our time and our lives this New Year depends on how we look at ourselves and of the lessons passed.

With that said, here are a few thoughts and quotes to  
**See CSM — Page 7**



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## Season's greetings, reflection on 2008



What a great year it has been for our Army and the 1st Mission Support Command! As always, our primary thoughts go to our deployed Soldiers and their Families. We wish them a happy, safe and secure holiday season. We currently have over 200 Soldiers mobilized around the globe in support of the Global War on Terror. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers. They are our treasures, defending our freedoms each and every day.

This, the 100th year of the Army Reserve, was a year of huge accomplishments for "Los PRimeros." We mobilized and demobilized over 500 Soldiers. Thankfully, due to our training, equipment and leadership, we did not "leave any Soldier behind."

Importantly, during the year, the 1st Mission Support Command transformed from our legacy structure, the 65th Regional Readiness Command. Highlighting this expeditionary evolution, there was a great and historic reflagging event at the El Morro fortress where seven out of our nine prior Commanding Generals honored us with their presence. Similarly, underscoring our important orientation on our Soldiers, we revived the tradition of the NCO Ball — an event marking the tremendous contributions of Puerto Ricans to the development of our Nation.

Operationally, our Boricuas touched every corner of the globe. We mobilized and deployed Soldiers to Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Jordan, Korea, Germany, Dominican Republic, the Bahamas, Chile, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama.

We had a number of major deployments within the United States also, including: Alaska, California and Texas.

Words cannot express the pride, professionalism and expertise in how our Soldiers perform their daily missions. The Army recognizes our great capabilities. Illustrating this, we took top honors at the Department of the Army level in maintenance awards.

On the community front, the 1st Mission Support Command earned a high distinction as being named the winner of the Army Reserve's Community of Excellence Award. With this honor, we were awarded three quarters of a million dollars in discretionary funds for community programs.

We also lead the way in the Army Reserve by conducting the first Yellow Ribbon Ceremony, which is a phenomenal Army-wide program oriented to caring for the Soldiers and their Families before, during and after mobilization.

Gone are the days of hastily planned, crammed-in pre-deployment briefings in the drill hall. We now inform and prepare our Soldiers and family members in a much more relaxed and luxurious hotel environment over a period of several days. What a positive change! We are doing a much better job of taking care of our families — ask any Soldier who participated in our events this past month.

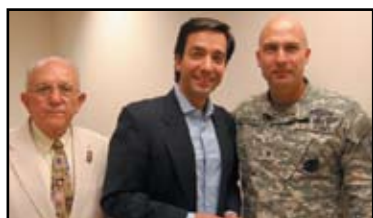
We led community rebuilding projects in Aguas Buenas, Cidra, and Yabucoa.

Lastly, this was the second year straight that our retirees were specifically honored by the Puerto Rican Senate — recognition they justly deserved. In a similar ceremony, on September 11th, all our veterans were recognized by the Puerto Rican legislature and presented with a specially minted medallion "in defense of freedom."

Thank you for all you have done to support our Soldiers over the last year. We know that 2009 will be another year of great accomplishment, pride and distinction for us. We extend to you and your family our sincere holiday wishes.

## 1st MSC in review...

**1st Mission Support Command wrapped up 2008 with a year of accomplishments in training, deployments, exercises, awards and family readiness initiatives. The Year in Pictures starts on Pg. 17.**



Doel Gonzalez

**(Left to Right) Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army Maj. Gen. (ret.) Felix A. Santoni, the governor-elect of Puerto Rico Luis Fortuno and Brig. Gen. Joseph Anderson, Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Recruiting Command met with the personnel of the U.S. Army Recruiting Stations around the island. General Anderson has served as an advisor to the Secretary of the Army, ex Commander in Chief of the Joint Forces in Iraq who also fought in Panama, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan. He is the recipient of two Bronze Stars, the Legion of Merit and other decorations. He described Puerto Rican Soldiers as great Soldiers and emphasized their value of loyalty to their comrades.**

## Tax training classes for 2009

"The tax season is around the corner and following a long time tradition, the Legal Assistance Office is requesting volunteers for the upcoming Tax season. Tax training at Fort Buchanan will be January 12 through 16, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance training will be open for the first twenty volunteers. After successful completion of the training the volunteers will be VITA certified.

Point of contact for location of training and additional information is Jose Marquez, legal assistant, at 707-5138.



## Correction

**In the December 2008 El Morro, Col. (Ret.) Héctor Cordero Vega was misidentified as Jaime Domenech. Vega was the featured speaker at a ceremony honoring San Juan and Puerto Rican veterans November 14 at American Legion Post 113, Bayamon. Following his liberation as a Korean POW, Vega finished his military career and later retired as federal judge in Puerto Rico.**

## Ft. Buchanan Religious Services Office ministers to Wounded Warriors, families

### Religious Services Office

There are nine Community Based Warrior Transition Units in the Army but only one located on a U.S. Army Reserve installation. The Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, CBWTU is commanded by Lt. Col. Marivel Velazquez. The unit has a fluctuating population of between 60-100 Warriors in Transition.

In FM 1-05, *Religious Support*, it states that the Installation Chaplain is, "To provide religious support for units and personnel on the installation." This was happily done by the Fort Buchanan Religious Support Office (RSO).

The Fort Buchanan RSO quickly adopted the CBWTU and began providing pastoral care, counseling and religious services to both the CBWTU staff and the Warriors in Transition. Although Fort Buchanan is the only USAR installation with a CBWTU, the quality of medical, administrative and pastoral care is equal to any active duty installation in the Army.

As the full-time Installation Chaplain, Chap. (LTC) Ken Lawson and his staff began to build relationships with the CBWTU Commander, First Sergeant and staff. After earning the confidence of these administrative and medical professionals, the chaplains began to focus their ministries on the Warriors in Transition and their families.

Guidelines for providing chaplain services to a CBWTU are briefly covered in *Department of the Army WTU Consolidated Guidance – 18 July 2008*. In this guidance the chaplain's duties are outlined as a provider or coordinator of religious support to both the staff and the wounded Soldiers. A key statement in this guidance is that a CBWTU will "establish conditions that facilitate the Soldier's healing process physically, mentally and spiritually."

Fully understanding that wounded Soldiers need healing in these three areas, chaplains at Fort Buchanan were eager to contribute to the spiritual well-being of both Warriors in Transition and their family members.

Building personal relationships is the first step to successful ministry with wounded or injured Soldiers. Once the chaplain establishes a good relationship with the CBWTU staff, the chaplain will begin to get referrals. The wounded troops assigned to Fort Bu-



Marc McCormick

**Chap. (Lt. Col.) Ken Lawson provided the benediction following a promotion ceremony for Staff Sgt. Vanessa Colon and Sgt. Ingrid Ramos who work with Wounded Warriors at Buchanan's CBWTU.**

chanan do not need the chaplain to be a medical advisor or a social worker, since these roles are already fulfilled by others. The wounded Soldiers want the chaplain to represent God, to be a spokesperson for spiritual and religious truth. Knowing that healing is physical, emotional and spiritual, the chaplains pray with the wounded, read scripture together and discuss religious issues such as faith, grace, prayer, sacraments or ordinances, and forgiveness.

Warriors in Transition at the Fort Buchanan CBWTU live all over Puerto Rico. This means that the chaplains provide home visits and ministry to the Soldiers when they are visiting Fort Buchanan for appointments.

Wounded Soldiers need to know that they are valued and appreciated. One way the RSO at Fort Buchanan does this is by having their Warriors in Transition positioned at a place of honor at prayer breakfasts, celebrating events such as Memorial Day and Veteran's Day. In everyday activities, the chaplain ministry of presence at family events, promotion ceremonies and various administrative activities allow the wounded troops to have easy access to the chaplains. This often leads to various counseling opportunities where the chaplain can help resolve a problem before it becomes more difficult to manage. One initiative created by Chaplain Lawson and coordinated with CBWTU commanding officer Velazquez was an all-day chaplain seminar hosted by the Fort Buchanan RSO. The project officers for the seminar were RSO Chaplain (Capt.) Eric Miletti and CBWTU 1st Lt. Yomaris Rivera. The seminar covered family wellness and reintegration issues from a religious perspective and was well attended and successful.





Leo Martinez

## IMCOM-SE visit...

David D. Tindoll, Jr., Director, Installation Management Command Southeast Region visited Fort Buchanan to speak with the command staff and garrison directors and learn about Buchanan's development during the Army's transformation process. He received briefings and made a tour of the garrison during his stay.

## The winners are...

Winners of the Fort Buchanan annual Christmas Parade are shown below. 1st Place went to Child, Youth & School Services. 2nd Place went to the Department of Public Works. Third Place went to El Caney Lodge.



(Top) CYSS won 1st Place in the parade. Accepting the award left to right were — Kat Hamberg, Functional Technology Specialist; Kayla Diaz, and Maria Gueria, Middle School Program Assistants and Aida Aquilun, Youth Center Director.



2nd Place Winner was the Department of Public Works. Accepting the award for the directorate was DPW Director Pascual Quinones.



El Caney Lodge placed third. Accepting the award were — Jose Suarez, maintenance worker; Isis Garcia, secretary; Abilda Aguirre, Front Desk Leader and Nilka Ortiz, Hotel Manager.

# Rodriguez retires from the Army — for the second time

Marc McCormick  
El Morro

December 19th Chap. (Lt. Col.) Rafael Rodriguez stood for retirement a second time. Having officially retired two years ago, Rodriguez was recalled to active duty to service the spiritual needs of Soldiers and their families at Fort Buchanan. As a man of God, he willingly accepted the call to duty.

The guest speaker for his retirement ceremony was Chap. (Brig. Gen.) Donald Rutherford, Deputy Chief of Chaplains.

Rutherford, well aware of the service to faith and the Army, saying, "We celebrate Father Rodriguez, an icon in the Army and Puerto Rico and Fort Buchanan. He has given 25 years of service to God and country. He started in 1958. After 33 years, 25 years of service to God and country, Rafael Rodriguez has certainly pointed the way. Many times he has fed those with spiritual hunger. His kind demeanor has brought light to those who look for compassion. He has sat with Soldiers and their families in times of war and in times of peace. He has scattered doubts of darkness in very trying times. He has never looked to himself. His faith in God and Christ is what gave him his strength. He let them know that only God can heal their hearts in troubled times."

Through births, and deaths, marriages and spiritual crises, Father Rodriguez administered to the souls and well beings of all Soldiers and family members regardless of their individual profession of faith, or, even at times, lack of faith, following Christ's proscription of being a servant to others.

Fort Buchanan Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo also had this to say about Rodriguez's career and service.

"Today we honor Father Rodriguez's retirement, a unique Soldier who has served God and country for many years. His military career began



Photos Leo Martinez

Father Rafael Rodriguez, center, reacts to comments made by one of his friends during his retirement ceremony Dec. 19, 2008. Left is Fort Buchanan Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo and right is Brig. Gen. David S. Elmo, commanding general, 1st Mission Support Command.

with the Air Force as an enlisted (sic) Airman in 1958. After an almost 30 year break in service, he joined the Army Reserve Chaplain Corps in 1988. Chaplain Rodriguez has done it all, enlisted service and officer; Army Reserve and active duty; in Europe, Korea and the United States, Saudi Arabia and here in Puerto Rico, where he is well known and loved. What makes this a significant ceremony, Father Rodriguez has been a member of a special class of Soldiers. He received a special gift, the call to duty by the highest commander-in-chief — God. He has been the true representative of what a chaplain should be. He has been a spiritual leader for Soldiers of our nation, our sons and daughters. He has always been lending a hand in the most challenging environments, at war and in peace. His sacrifices have been many and countless. No one will ever know because of his humble nature. It will remain between him and God."

"His mission has been a gift to all who know him," Domingo said.



(Left) Chap. (Lt. Col.) Ken Lawson, right, presents Chap. Rodriguez the Retirement Certificate that he had been holding for two years. (Center) Chap. (Brig. Gen.) Donald Rutherford, Deputy Chief of Chaplains, honored Father Rodriguez by speaking at the retirement ceremony. Old friends, Chap. Rodriguez was happily surprised by the arrival of Col. De Jesus. Rodriguez recalled her as his mentor when he was a fresh officer graduate at his first duty station.

RSO — From Page 3

As Chaplain Lawson stated, "A WT (Warrior in Transition) is highly valued by the RSO. We will always be there for them and their families. We never say no to their needs. If we can not perform the service they need, we will always provide them someone who can assist them." USAR Chaplain Eric Milette said, "The wounded troops are happy to receive our ministry. We chaplains get a blessing from being a blessing to others."



Leo Martinez

Chap. (Capt.) Eric Milette and 1st Lt. Yomaris Rivera put together a marriage workshop for CBWTU Soldiers assigned to Fort Buchanan.



(Left) Installation Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Ken Lawson, Chap. (Capt.) Jesus Munoz and RSO Assistant Spc. Gloria Brito-Fortuna presented Rodriguez with a remembrance from the Religious Services Office staff. (Right) recently retired (Col.) Margarita Aponte spoke about her experiences over the years with Father Rodriguez.







# The Environmental Restoration Program at Fort Buchanan

*Derrick Stepanof, DPW Environmental Division & Yvette Robles, DPW-AFH*

*This is the first article of a 5-part series about restoration projects at Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico.*

The U.S. Army has developed an environmental policy that has made a commitment to improve the environment while providing safe management practices for its installations. In 1986, the Department of Defense developed an Environmental Restoration Program to address contamination caused by past practices. The goal of this program is to identify, investigate, and cleanup contamination of hazardous material at active/operating Army Installations that occurred before 1986. Contamination caused by installation operations after October 1986 is currently addressed under the Compliance Cleanup Program, and not the Restoration Program.

From the beginning of the Environmental Restoration Program, from 1980's through 2006, the Army addressed 10,451 potentially contaminated sites. Of those sites, 9,568 require no further action, either due to site characterization that revealed no threat to human health and the environment (no contamination, or no pathways, and receptors), or due to cleanup actions that achieved Response Complete on those sites where the Army would like to attain by the year 2014. (Army Environmental Clean up Strategic Plan, March 2007).

Restoration sites are regulated by both federal, and state level environmental agencies. The United States Environmental Protection represents the federal regulator and at the state level for Puerto Rico, the state regulator is the Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board. These agencies follow federal laws known as the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, and the Resource Conservation Recovery Act, to provide the framework for the cleanup. These laws allow the agencies to document the process to identify, investigate, cleanup, and close the contaminated sites.

Currently, Fort Buchanan has three environmental restoration sites —

- The first is called the **Northwestern Boundary Investigation** that was originated on January 2005 as per a USEPA ordered to Fort Buchanan to investigate the presence of a chlorinated solvent detected in the groundwater at the adjacent property located northwest boundary. This project is administered under the RCRA program, and is currently in the RCRA Facility Investigative phase. The RCRA Corrective Action Program and Fort Buchanan restoration projects under RCRA will be presented in another informative article on environmental restoration. Fort Buchanan has installed 41 groundwater monitoring wells on site, in six phases of the investigation to assist in locating the source area. In addition, the investigation is currently constructing a groundwater flow model to characterize the groundwater bearing aquifer. The next phase will be the cleanup phase (Corrective Measure Study and Implementation Phases); and is expected to begin in 2009. Site closure will be complete after long term monitoring, which could be as soon as 2011, depending on the analytical results.

Cleanup methods will be presented in another informative article on environmental restoration.

- The second environmental restoration site is called **Site Wide Investigation**. It is a collective investigative study and it will address the concerns that the USEPA has of 13 areas, where chemicals were reportedly stored or suspected releases and spills have occurred. This project is also in the RFI corrective action phase. The sampling of soil and groundwater media at these sites has begun in October of this year and is expected to be completed by the end of November 2008. If impacts to the soil and groundwater are indicated by analytical data, then sites will be tracked individually under the Restoration Program, and addressed areas of concern as per DoD and USEPA clean up guidance. Corrective Measures Studies will be performed with Corrective Measure Implemented in the construction phase, where necessary. If no contamination is found then no further action will be requested and the site(s) will be closed.

- The third environmental restoration site is under the **Military Munitions Response Program** and it's administered under the CERCLA Program and the lead regulatory agency is the PREQB. This site refers to the area formerly known as Camp Buchanan that currently comprises approximately 32 acres, located within Fort Buchanan and covers the areas of the western half of the golf course, Maxi Williams Jr. Field, the 1300 buildings area and portions of the limestone hill located northwest of these areas. In accordance with the Preliminary Assessment completed in September 2008, Camp Buchanan Training Area was identified as having been used by the DoD for a World War I small arms firing range with fire directed into a target berm area, located in the 1300 buildings area.

The study also indicated that in 1985, two 3-inch stoke mortars were found buried in a trench; and in 2002 a 3.5-inch rocket was found on the surface in the study area.

The study did not find any evidence leading to believe that the encountered mortar and rocket rounds had been fired at Camp Buchanan.

The encountered mortars and rocket are believed to have been Discarded Military Munitions.

However, these encountered rounds of munitions have advanced the investigative phase to the next step — the Remedial Investigative phase where a more extensive investigative study will occur.

The RI corrective action phase is expected to begin in 2010.

Fort Buchanan is fulfilling its mission for the Army by developing effective communication with the regulatory agencies, actively investigating these three contaminated sites, and moving toward restoring them for a safe and clean environment.

For further information, contact is Derrick Stepanof, Contractor-ASIS Representative, Restoration Manager at 707-3573 or by email to [derrick.stepanof@us.army.mil](mailto:derrick.stepanof@us.army.mil).



## Fort Buchanan Historical Facts

*DPW Environmental Div. & Yvette Robles*

Many Army forts are home to cultural resources such as architectural sites. One site in particular is the bridge located next to building 540. During World War II, many physical improvements were made to Fort Buchanan, including the construction of El Toro Creek Channel. Concrete bridges for both vehicle, and pedestrian traffic over the creek bed, and canal (which runs in a north-west south-east direction through the central and southern portions of the reservation) were part of these improvements. Bridge 540 is characterized by a raised, and squared concrete guardrail which has an impressed concrete plaque in the exterior guardrail identifying its date of construction and the U.S. Army Engineers as its makers.

Another architectural site are a small segment of remnant railroad, (once part of Fort Buchanan's internal rail transportation system), which lead to Bridge 540. Located at the Wash Rack area on Columbus Street, this site consists of approximately 10 meters of intact track. These tracks were once used to transport supplies, and troops during the World War II era, and were finally dismantled in 1962.

Cultural resources are irreplaceable material expressions, and important values that connect us to our past, giving us the means to study the events that have formed our country, our communities, and ourselves. Their true value rests in what they offer us in terms of scientific information, interpretive opportunities, and cultural identity. Fort Buchanan has an Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan that outlines how the installation will manage its resources in compliance with cultural resources statutes, executive orders, presidential memoranda, regulations, and other requirements. The Directorate of Public Works and its Environmental Division are committed to protect, and preserve the resources in order to help future generations learn about the installation's history.

For more Architectural History on Fort Buchanan, contact Alicia M. Navedo-Núñez, Environmental Conservation Manager, DPW- Environmental Division at 707-3508 or email to [alicia.navedo@us.army.mil](mailto:alicia.navedo@us.army.mil).

**Bridge 540 Side View Toro Creek Channel**



Photos Alicia Navedo

**Railroad Trail Remnants on Columbus Street**



**Bridge 540 Top View**



## CYSS announces construction projects

### *Child, Youth & School Services*

The Department of the Army has approved funds to build a new 160 spaces capacity Child Development Center/ School Age Services at Fort Buchanan.

This is a project in which our community has been waiting for almost 20 years. It is also projected a new Youth Center for 150 spaces capacity.

The two new buildings will provide child /youth care services from infancy through the teenage years.

Both facilities will be located at the Buchanan Heights housing units closed to the school system.

It is expected that the ground breaking for the new child development center/ school age services will on January 2009.

There is no doubt that this new building will be a "state of the art facility" providing care that ensures the healthy growth and development of our children.

Buchanan Heights residents should be aware that there will be tow, machinery,

trucks and employees working around building 1025.

CYSS apologizes for any inconvenience but in the near future fort Buchanan community will have new facilities for our children and youth.

Effective January 2009, due to the construction of the new facility at the site where CYSS Middle School Program is located, services will relocate at the Teen Center, Bldg. 519 and Rm. 77 at the old Intermediate School.

CYSS parents will be notified of the move the new temporary facility.







## Melendez takes command of 2/348th

**Capt. Lilliana Alemán**  
2nd Battalion, 348th Regiment

After two years and half as the battalion commander, 2nd Battalion, 348th Regiment, 158th Infantry Brigade, Lt. Col. Rafael Serrano handed over the colors to Lt. Col. Ismael Meléndez in a ceremony that took place at the Maxie R. Williams Jr. field, Fort Buchanan; in spite of being a rainy day.

"These last thirty one months have been an opportunity for us to embark in new challenges," outgoing commander Lt. Col. Serrano said, during his farewell speech.

"Every mission that was given to us required the creation of a new script and the chance to learn new skills," he said.

Throughout his tenure, Serrano led the unit in several missions, training Reserve Soldiers for deployment to a combat zone.

Among Serrano's biggest accomplishments, as battalion commander of the "Best of the Best," was the development of an Improvised Explosive Device Petting Zoo in Camp Santiago, Salinas, Puerto Rico and the planning and execution of a Defense Live Fire training which took place at Fort Stewart, Ga. at the beginning of 2008.

"Don't worry about the rain. In the Warrior Brigade, if it's not raining, we are not training," said 158th brigade commander Col. John L. Smith. Those were the opening words of what turned out to be a warm speech.

"There is a lot of uncertainty. But one thing is certain, these Soldiers standing before you, are magnificent Soldiers who have been traveling to get other Soldiers ready for combat."

Smith also recognized that Lt. Col. Serrano superbly completed every mission given to him and assured Serrano that he made a mark with his outstanding success as battalion commander.

Smith also pointed out to incoming commander, Lt. Col. Meléndez about the challenges he will encounter and thanked him in advance for the sacrifices he will make.

Smith stressed to the troops, "You have a new leader, Ismael and I need you to



Staff Sgt. Lymari Sanchez-Maldonado

**Command Sergeant Major Juan Marín passes the colors to Lt. Col. Rafael Serrano, outgoing commander, 2nd Battalion, 348th Regiment, for presentation to incoming commander Lt. Col. Ismael Meléndez during a Change of Command ceremony Dec. 19, 2008 at Fort Buchanan's Maxie Williams Field. Pictured left is Col. John L. Smith. In the background is Lt. Col. Ismael Meléndez.**

support him the same way you supported Lt. Col. Serrano."

Lt. Col. Meléndez called the troops to uphold the excellence they offered to Lt. Col. Serrano and said, "I expect the best from you. You are the ones who make it happen. Your support will make the big difference between victory and defeat."

Lt. Col. Serrano was accompanied by his wife, Angie Serrano, and his father, Ángel Serrano.

Lt. Col. Meléndez' family also honored him with their presence. Attending the ceremony was his wife Nydia Rosa; daughter Melis Meléndez; son Ismael Meléndez, and granddaughter Leonelis Rivera.

## Townhall looks at Fort Buchanan's Year to Date

**Marc McCormick**  
El Morro

Fort Buchanan Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo held a garrison Townhall Dec. 3, 2008 in the Community Club.

The Townhall consisted of short briefings by the Public Affairs Officer, Grissel Rosa and Michael Hernandez, director, DOIM.

Hernandez reviewed the newest changes to DOIM users computers. He provided a detailed explanation of the security process implemented for garrison information systems.

There were two featured speakers for the Townhall. First to address the garrison staff and employees was Col. Manuel Valentin, commanding officer, Rodriguez Army Health Clinic. Valentin was asked to speak by Gisela Aponte, Alcohol and Drug Control Officer, on behalf of the 3-D (Drunk Driving & Drug) Campaign; a campaign which strives to educate and prevent alcohol and drug related accidents, particularly through the holiday seasons. Valentin offered excellent first person testimony. He, as a teenager, had been involved in a near fatal automobile accident during his teens. He, and the other person in the car, barely survived a collision with an eighteen wheeler. Valentin and his companion were both drunk. Through his experiences, Valentin was able to offer grim details of his accidents and others he attended to as a physician, lending credence to what could be called a 4-D concept — drink, drugs, drive, die. Prevention is as simple as saying no.

Following Col. Valentin was this year's Puerto Rico Combined Federal Campaign Manager Frances Rios de Moran, Court Unit Executive, United States District Court, District of Puerto Rico.

Moran related a moving and personal story of how she recovered from a personal tragedy and learned to live again through service to others. She related the great comfort and satisfaction which comes from contributing through CFC. As a special reminder of how CFC touches lives, Moran presented Olga Lopez de Krumhanst, executive director, Puerto Rico Downs Syndrome Society. Accompanying Krumhanst was Limane Camacho, the mother of Downs Syndrome Poster Child Frances Torres. Extremely sociable, the lovely Frances interacted with everyone and by her presence was living testament why we are all blessed when we help through the campaign.

The Townhall concluded with questions from the audience answered by members of the command staff.



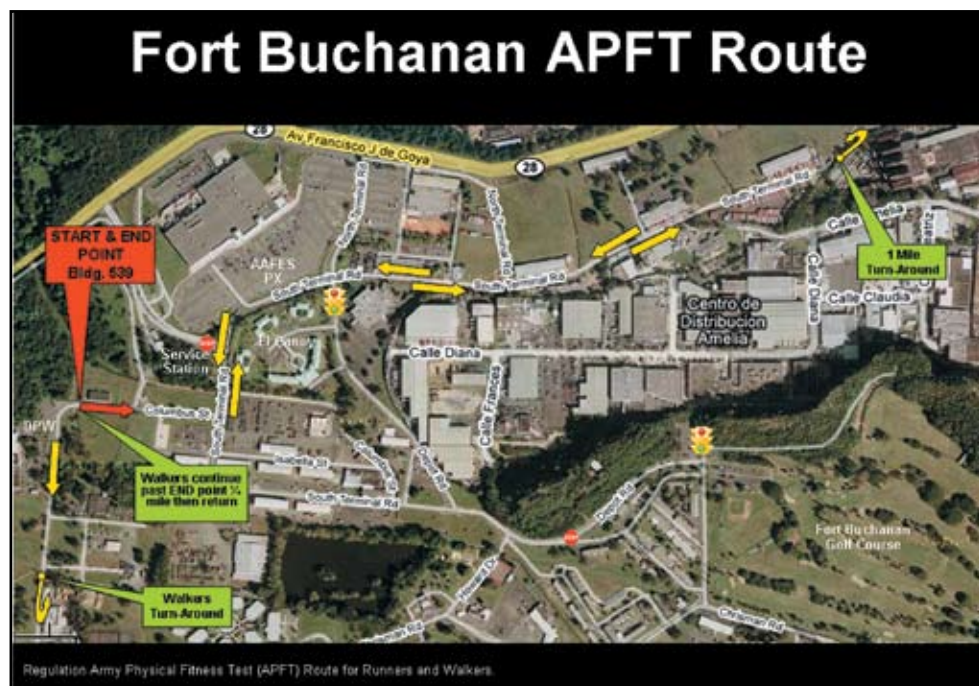
Rosie Irizarry



Marc McCormick

**(Left) Olga Lopez de Krumhanst, executive director, PR Downs Syndrom Society, holds Frances Torres while her mother, Limane Camacho speaks about supporting CFC. (Right) Col. Manuel Valentin talks about the dangers of drug or drugged driving during the holiday season.**

## For APFT test purposes, only the official route can be used for scoring







# Uniform issues require constant attention

**Fort Buchanan Uniform Policy requires Soldiers to conform to the proper maintenance and wearing of uniform items. On-the-spot corrections are the duty of all non-commissioned officers regardless of unit or command.**

El Morro Staff

**Editor's Note: The entire article concerning the proper wear of uniforms and the Fort Buchanan policy were printed in the May 2008 issue of El Morro. The entire policy can be read from the garrison's P: Drive or can be obtained from the Command Sergeant Major. It is the duty of all Soldiers to conform to this policy. The following is an extract from the larger document.**

From the Command Sergeant Major — With Soldiers in mind, I would like to take the occasion to re-examine the basics of Soldiering. I do this first because I want to establish my expectation regarding standards and discipline — regardless of your component. A neat and well-groomed appearance is fundamental and contributes to building the pride and esprit de corps essential to an effective military force.

Commanders and first-line leaders are responsible to ensure Soldiers present a neat appearance and conduct themselves professionally both on and off duty. It is the responsibility of commanders and first-line leaders to ensure that their Soldiers present a neat and disciplined appearance. In reference to the basics and losing our focus, I'm referring to the fundamentals such as walking across the PX parking lot without your headgear and when off post, not wearing your headgear at all. Other observations I have made where I believe we are losing focus is wearing your security access badge or military ID on your uniform outside of your work area, having your headgear visible or hanging out of your side cargo pocket, wearing a patrol cap instead of the garrison standard which is the beret,

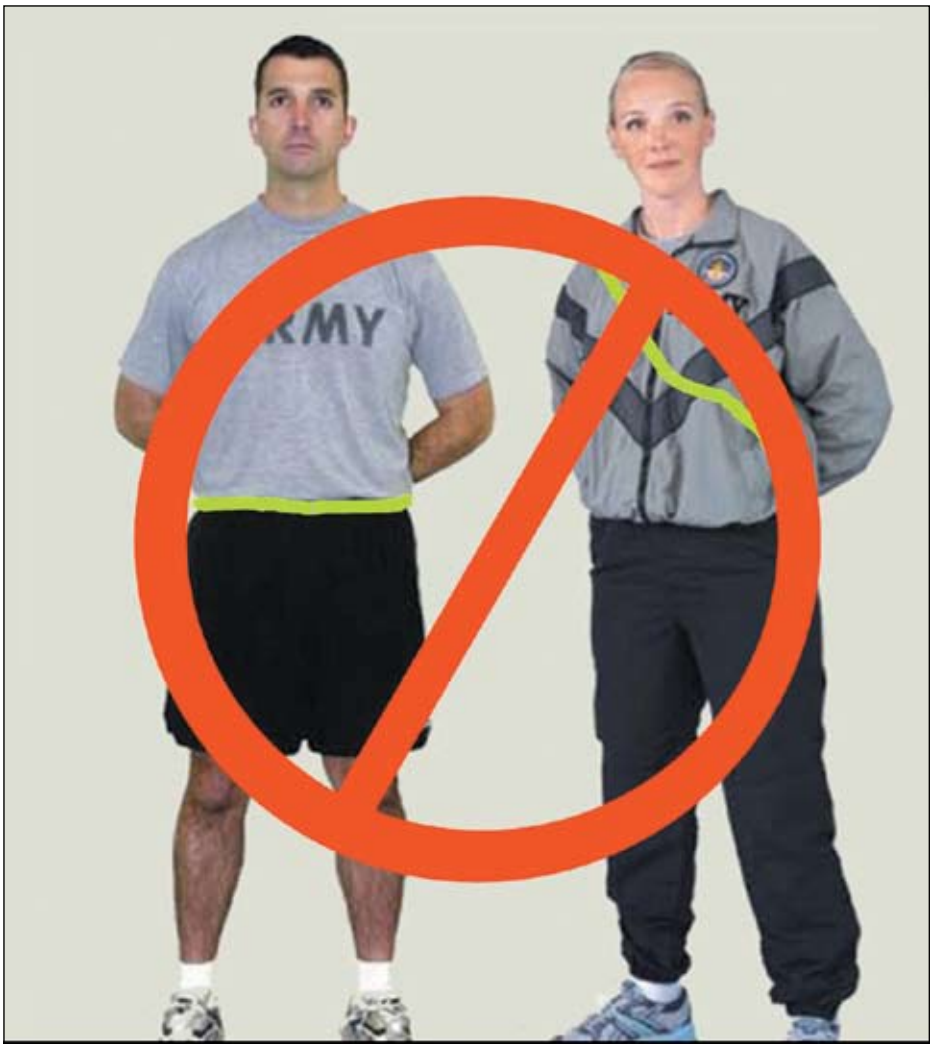
not coming to parade rest when addressing senior NCOs, wearing sunglasses on top of your head, having your keys hang below your blouse, not wearing a reflective belt when conducting physical fitness training outdoors, and talking on the cell phone while walking in uniform on or off the installation. Again, it's the basics.

One of my latest observations is seeing Soldiers walking around in uniform with a wireless Bluetooth or non-wireless ear piece. For those who are unsure, the Bluetooth device is only authorized while in your vehicle.

Another area we tend to neglect is badges and other insignia. If you're going to wear metallic devices such as metal badges and insignia, ensure they are free of scratches and remain subdued, as applicable. Also, keep your shoes and boots cleaned. Just because we wear rough leather doesn't mean they don't have to be cleaned or brushed on occasion. Remember, we're in Garrison.

Lastly, while wearing certain uniforms, keep them buttoned, zipped, or snapped. An example that comes to mind is while wearing the Improved Physical Fitness Uniform jacket, zip it up to just above the word ARMY. All Soldiers regardless of component, grade or position are expected to adhere to the values and standards established. Remember, a well-groomed appearance is central to good order and discipline and contributes immeasurably to building of pride and esprit de corps.

If you are unsure about how to wear a particular item of clothing, Army Regulation 670-1, *Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia*, is the standard that directs our conduct and tells us how to wear the uniform and accessories properly in both garrison and field environments.



**Absolutely No Physical Fitness Uniforms allowed in the PX, Food Court, or Commissary Areas \***

\*Exception is made for Service Members assigned to Warrior Transition Units with orders in hand by order of the Installation Commander.

**Exercising proper judgment...**

**The PT uniform is not authorized in the PX, Pxtra, Food Court, or Commissary areas. An exception is made for Servicemembers assigned to Warrior Transition Units with orders in hand.**

## CSM

consider beginning the new year.

- Success depends on your backbone, not your wishbone. **Unknown Author**
- Be ready when opportunity comes. Luck is the time when preparation and opportunity meet. **Roy D. Chapin Jr.**
- A person who aims at nothing is sure to hit it. **Anonymous**
- Hold yourself responsible for a higher standard than anybody else expects of you, never excuse yourself. **Henry Ward Beecher**
- There are only two options regarding commitment. You're either in or out. There's no such thing as a life in-between. **Pat Riley**
- I've found that luck is quite predictable. If you want more luck, take more chances. Be more active. Show up more often. **Brian Tracy**
- Depend on the rabbit's foot if you will, but remember it didn't work for the rabbit. **R. E. Shay**
- Live for something rather than die for nothing. **George Patton**
- I don't think much of a man who is not wiser today than he was yesterday. **Abraham Lincoln**
- The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to

excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor. **Vincent Lombardi**

- Ability is what you're capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it. **Lou Holtz**
- Try not to become a man of success. Rather become a man of value. **Albert Einstein**
- Act like you expect to get into the end zone. **Joe Paterno**
- Continuous effort, not strength or intelligence is the key to unlocking our potential. **Liane Cardes**
- It is not your aptitude, but your attitude, that determines your altitude. **Zig Ziglar**
- It takes less time to do things right than to explain why you did it wrong. **Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**
- Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly. **Robert F. Kennedy**
- Optimism means expecting the best, but confidence means knowing how to handle the worst. **The Zurich Axioms**
- The probability that we may fail in struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause we believe to be just. **Abraham Lincoln**

- It's how you deal with failure that determines how you achieve success. **David Feherty**
- It is common sense to take a method and try it. If it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something. **Franklin D. Roosevelt**
- The bravest are surely those who have the clearest vision of what is before them, glory and danger alike, and yet notwithstanding, go out and meet it. **Thucydides**
- To avoid criticism, do nothing, say nothing, be nothing. **Elbert Hubbard**
- Many of life's failures are men who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up. **Thomas Edison**
- Happiness is a butterfly, which, when pursued, is always just beyond your grasp, but which, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you. **Nathaniel Hawthorne**
- If you can imagine it you can achieve it. If you can dream it, you can become it. **William Arthur Ward**
- All that we are is the result of what we have thought. **Buddha**
- Concentrate all your thoughts upon

the work at hand. **Alexander Graham Bell**

- Formal education will make you a living; self education will make you a fortune. **Jim Rohn**
  - He who asks a question is a fool for a minute. He who does not remains a fool forever. **Chinese Proverb**
  - Love what you do. Do what you love. **Wayne Dyer**
  - An excuse is worse than a lie, for an excuse is a lie, guarded. **Alexander Pope**
  - Too many people overvalue what they are not and undervalue what they are. **Malcolm S. Forbes**
  - What you risk reveals what you value. **Jeanette Winterson**
  - Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier. **Colin Powell**
  - In the confrontation between the stream and the rock, the stream always wins, not through strength but by perseverance. **H. Jackson Brown**
- Happy New Year and keep Soldiering on.
- ARMY STRONG!**

From Page 2







# DoD releases 2009 BAH rates

El Morro Staff

Military members will receive an average housing allowance increase of 6.9 percent when the new rates take effect, Jan. 1, 2009.

For members with dependents, average increases in the BAH are approximately \$95 per month. A typical junior enlisted member with dependents, for example, will find his/her BAH about \$68 per month higher than last year, while a senior non-commissioned officer with dependents will receive about \$93 more than last year.

Three components are included in the BAH computation: median current market rent; average utilities (including electricity, heat, and water/sewer) and average renter's insurance.

Total housing costs are calculated for six housing profiles

(based on dwelling type and number of bedrooms) in each military housing area. The BAH rates are then calculated for each pay grade, both with and without dependents. An estimated \$17.4 billion will be paid to nearly 950,000 service members in 2009.

An integral part of the BAH program is the provision of individual rate protection to all members.

No matter what happens to measured housing costs, an individual member in a given location will never see his/her BAH rate decrease. This assures that members who have made long-term commitments in the form of a lease or contract are not penalized if the area's housing costs decrease.

In addition, the military services were recently authorized to pay for local moves for military



members forced out of a rented home due to their landlord's foreclosure.

For more information, service members and their families should contact their installation housing office, or contact Military One Source at 1-800-342-9647, or visit Web site <http://www.militaryonesource.com>.

For more information on BAH, visit visit Web site <http://perdiem.hqda.pentagon.mil/perdiem/bah.html>.

## Implementation of Safety Action Plan begins with leadership

Ft. Buchanan Safety Office

The Fort Buchanan Safety Plan for FY 09 has been approved and is being implemented installation wide.

Alfredo Noguera, Installation Safety Officer, said the plan was developed at the direction of the Installation Management Command. The program seeks to involve military and civilian personnel in the implementation of the plan, which emphasizes risk management, loss prevention, and involvement of key leaders.

"Safety is everybody's business and is truly an integral part of what we do here at Fort Buchanan," Noguera said. "Everyone has to be involved, beginning with the leaders, for the program to be successful. Individuals have to take responsibility (for their actions), too."

In approving the installation safety plan, Fort Buchanan Garrison Commander Col. Edwin Domingo said the involvement of supervisors will be the key to reducing injuries at the workplace.

"Commitment at all levels sets the tone for success," Domingo stated during the Garrison's last safety council meeting of 2008. "The level of importance that a leader places on safety determines the level of emphasis it gets throughout any organization. It is important that we maintain a climate that encourages safe behavior on and off duty."

The Fort Buchanan Safety Plan is built on the premise of making safety an integral part of mission accomplishment, according to Noguera.

cording to Noguera.

The main objectives in implementing the program include — holding leaders accountable for their performance to reduce injuries; ensuring leaders maintain a climate that encourages safe behavior; providing leaders and supervisors with training that increases their knowledge of safety practices and improves their skills for mitigating risks; and establishing opportunities for leaders and supervisors to participate in safety forums, such as Safety Council meetings.

Noguera said safety begins at the departmental level. Personnel should be getting together regularly and discussing safety concerns, and developing ideas and solutions or guidance for their particular directorates. These ideas, issues or guidance should be brought to the quarterly Safety Council meetings and shared with other organizations.

The ISO staff will provide safety training opportunities throughout the year. Noguera said the safety staff just offered the Collateral Duty Safety Officer course, preparing 19 Army Civilians to assist in the implementation of the safety plan. Other training, such as Traffic Safety, is offered on a weekly basis on Fort Buchanan as well as training for CYS/CDC personnel.

The entire Fort Buchanan Safety Plan is posted at the Fort Buchanan Garrison "P Drive" under the Installation Safety Office folder. This folder is updated regularly and includes a variety of safety information, including for specific seasons of the year and for holiday concerns.

Other training is available online as well. "Taking these courses online will save time and give personnel the flexibility of when, where and at what pace to take the course," Noguera said.

The Accident Avoidance Course, Composite Risk Management, and safety courses tailored for employees, managers, and supervisors, for example, are being provided in an online course format, which may take about 75 minutes to complete. Many of these courses are mandatory.

The Accident Avoidance Course is required every four years for any government personnel, including contract employees, who drive a government or leased (General Services Administration) vehicle.

Anyone needing information about the plan or other safety topics and doesn't have access to it via computer can visit the ISO at Bldg. 1021-C or call 707-2418.

## VA urges vets to sign up for direct deposit

Annie Moraza-Ferreras  
VA Caribbean Healthcare System

WASHINGTON — Every month, 730,000 veterans or survivors look for their compensation, pension checks or educational assistance payments in their mailboxes. Nearly all receive them, but theft and mail delays cause problems for some veterans, which can be prevented by direct deposits.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is urging those veterans and family members now receiving paper checks to join nearly 3.1 million others whose VA

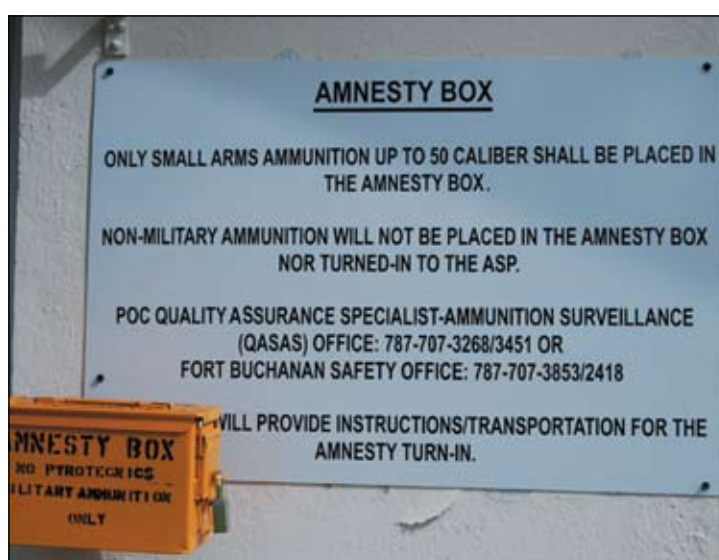
payments are safely deposited electronically.

"VA is teaming up with the Treasury Department in a new campaign to protect government beneficiaries against the theft of funds and of their identities," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake.

Peake cited several easy ways to sign up for direct deposit — calling VA toll-free at (800) 333-1795 or enrolling online at Web site [www.GoDirect.org](http://www.GoDirect.org). Veterans, and family members who receive VA payments, also can sign up by contacting a VA regional benefits office or their financial institution. Information

about direct deposits will be included in VA's monthly compensation and pension envelopes throughout 2009.

The VA Secretary urged veterans to remember that direct deposits relieve worry about mail delivery being delayed by severe weather or natural disasters. The deposits also eliminate trips to banks or credit unions to deposit checks, while providing immediate access to money.



Marc McCormick

## The Safety of the Matter...

(Left) The Fort Buchanan Safety office held training for all directorates Collateral Duty Safety Officers. Class attendees were — Ana Zavala, Rogelio Velez, Jose Berrios, Alberto Orellana, Jorge Reyes-Arroyo, Luis Rivera, Cathleen Hamberg, Ignacio Gonzalez, Angel Sanchez, Edgardo Hernandez, Michael Ramos, Ramon Moreno, Gloria Velázquez-Ares, Juan Oliveras, Edgardo Garced, Nydia Mejias, Carmen Dieppa, Aida Aguila and Magda Rivera. (Right) Safety Reminder — There are two locations on Fort Buchanan where anyone can place items in the Amnesty Boxes such as the one pictured here. One Box is located at Bldg. 206 (across from CPAC) and the other is located at the main entrance to the Transportation Office, Bldg. 506.





# San Juan recruiters — the edge for USAREC

**Doel L. González**

*Puerto Rico District, Advertisement & Public Affairs*

**GUAYNABO, PR** — With the fanfare found at an Oscar ceremony, the recruiters from the Puerto Rico District, and the Aguadilla and San Juan Companies celebrated their Fiscal Year 08 accomplishments.

Our local Soldiers, along with their Miami counterparts from the North Dade, South Dade, Ft. Lauderdale and Jupiter Companies, experienced the luxuries of the PGA Resort and Spa in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, where the Miami Recruiting Battalion hosted their Annual Training Conference.

The battalion leadership team, Lt. Col. Scott Kneller and Command Sergeant Major Melvin Williams, went the extra mile and made good on their promise to bring our local recruiters to the conference.

They couldn't have found a better place to welcome them back after a three year absence, than to do it at a golfer's paradise where pros such as Tiger Woods warm up their swing.

However, recruiters had no time for golf. Upon their arrival and after affectionate welcomes from the leadership team, everyone understood that the three day gathering, aside from pep talks and training, was mainly to recognize those who had excelled.

By then, the word was out that the United States Army Recruiting Command had exceeded the active recruiting mission by 517 and 445 Reserve contracts.

Additionally, everyone knew that the Miami battalion was a major contributor to that success, ranking at least sixth among the top producers, finishing first on the Reserves side of the house with a 116 percent production.

Although these were more than enough reasons to celebrate, within the next hours those assigned to the seven companies were going to know who had impacted the most within the battalion's overall achievements.

The celebration could not have had a better start since day one of the conference fell on Oct. 31, Halloween.

That night, uniforms stayed behind as recruiters dressed-up in whatever costume came to mind.

There were six feet tall toddlers in diapers along with King Tutankhamen, very well portrayed by the battalion commander. San Juan Company, known as the "Pirates," pushed their stance to the max by having each company member dress-up in any imaginable Pirate fashion.

Talents emerged from the dancing routines, karaoke singing, and through the sounds of Puerto Rican "plena."

On Saturday, after covering diverse recruiting training subjects during the day, the banquet night finally arrived. Soldiers, spouses, and other guests, all wearing their best galas, walked the red carpet where some were being interviewed for an inside the PGA Grand Ball Room broadcast.

At the ballroom's entrance, the official party welcomed everyone.

This year's official party included the guest of honor and keynote speaker, Brig. Gen. Hector Pagán, Deputy Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, Ft. Bragg, N.C., and his wife Elizabeth; the Puerto Rico Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, Major General (Ret.) Félix Santoni; the Commander of the 2nd Recruiting Brigade, Col. Rodney Symons; Miami Recruiting



**ATC Dinner & awards 2008 attendees** were Brig. Gen. Hector Pagán, deputy commander, U.S. Special Operations Command; Capt. Javier Sepulveda, commanding officer, San Juan Recruiting Company; San Juan recruiting Co. 1st Sgt. Charles Orange; Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army Maj. Gen. (Ret) Félix A. Santoni; Miami Recruiting Battalion Command Sergeant Major Melvin Williams; Miami recruiting Battalion Commanding Officer Lt. Col. Scott Kneller; 2nd Recruiting Brigade Commanding Officer Col. Rodney Symons.

Courtesy Photo

Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Scott Kneller and his wife Virna; and the Battalion Command Sergeant Major Melvin Williams.

In the ballroom, after the National Anthem and the respective formalities such as the symbolic honoring of "Our fallen Comrades," the traditional toasts and formal dinner, the event kept on course but with a little twist. Soldiers had put together a musical revue ranging from salsa dancing to rap singing.

After the performances, the event's speaker, Brig. Gen. Hector Pagán acknowledged his surprise and satisfaction with the show while recognizing the contributions of local recruiters to the total mission, and the leadership qualities of Capt. Javier Sepulveda, San Juan Company Commander.

The atmosphere grew as General Pagán gave his closing remarks and the anticipation of the formal awards ceremony was next.

Ten local recruiters, out of fourteen recipients, received the coveted Recruiter's Ring.

Being the second highest achievement award offered by USAREC, the ring symbolizes recruiting excellence in a long quest through eight levels of proficiency that test and proves the individual's ability and skill in recruiting.

A recruiter who earns the recruiter ring is forever marked as one of the finest members of the Army's recruiting team.

Soon after was the Glen E. Morrell award, the ultimate recruiting award, named after a retired Sergeant Major of the Army who served as USAREC's Command Sergeant Major from October 1981 to September 1982.

Of the twelve Soldiers who joined the small elite group, five of them belong to local units.

Subsequent to the Morell award, came the award recognition of the individuals who were instrumental to the success of the Miami Battalion during the fiscal year.

And, in keeping with the flamboyant tone of the evening, the battalion's Chief of Advertisement and Public Affairs, Harvey Spigler, along with his two bodyguards, brought forward a brief case chained to his hand where the names of the award winners were kept.

Among those recognized for their supporting role in aiding recruiters were Jose Rivera from the Personnel Section, Esperanza Wilson from Operations, and Hector Rivera, the local Education Service Specialist, who all shared the Top Civilian Staff Award.

Also recognized were two members of the local MEPS Army Guidance Shop, Sergeant First Class Edwin Cancel as Top Military Staff and Sergeant First Class José Colón Galindo as Top Guidance Counselor.

Other local awardees were Sergeant Lizmarie Dávila as Soldier of the Year, Staff Sergeant Freddy Rivera as NCO of the Year, Sergeant First Class Enrius Collazo as Station Commander of the Year, and Staff Sergeant Omayra San-Antonio as Top New Army Reserve Recruiter.

Along came Staff Sergeant Christian Velázquez as Army Reserve Recruiter of the Year, also receiving the Top Army Reserve Recruiter for acquiring and writing the most contracts for his component.

Meanwhile, since the Army relies on quality contracts to maintain its superiority, Sergeant First Class Wanda Valderrama received the Top Army Reserve Grade Senior Alfa Recruiter for enlisting soon to graduate high school seniors with the highest ASVAB scores results.

Being the Miami Battalion, recognized as the "Knights," there was a need for the traditional Round Table.

The key elements to their companies' success, and the new members of the Round Table are, —

- Sgt. Ruben Vega from San Juan Company.
- Staff Sgt. Edgardo Pagán from Aguadilla Company
- Sergeant First Class Aubrey Simon from the Puerto Rico District.

Teamwork promotes efficiency that leads to over performance and overachievement.

Although the joint effort from all the sixteen local stations impacted total production, Fajardo and Mayagüez, Puerto Rico stations received the top awards from those within.

Any organization's success involves many echelons to spin its wheels.

Induced by the Caribbean Ocean, the geographical separation from major headquarters has made local support a necessity for many years.

Therefore, aside from commanding the St. Thomas and St. Croix stations, the Puerto Rico District, formerly known as the San Juan Detachment, also serves as the next higher element to both local companies.

Within the District, assigned personnel depend on the supporting cast to expedite the process in areas such as administration, education, logistics, computerized systems, advertisement and public affairs, operations, and MEPS processing.

As a company, the Puerto Rico District also had chapters of successful production throughout the year.

Their biggest accomplishment was the recognition as the Best Future Sustainment Company, an award that exemplifies what Army recruiting is all about.

Not only it is important to find an applicant that enlists, but the mission is completed once the individual goes to training.

Finally, it was time to recognize the top company. USAREC's final closeout FY08 numbers for active Army were 80,517 and 26,945 for the Army Reserve.

The battalion made major contributions to that achievement, and everyone was aware that both local companies, Aguadilla and San Juan, were among the first eleven producers within USAREC.

Then San Juan was not only recognized as the Top Combined Volume Company for the battalion but also as ranking third in Regular Army Volume within USAREC.

Recruiters, military and civilians alike, had done their share; the push made by Capt. Sepulveda and his counterpart, First Sergeant Charles Orange, paid off.

That night, after the Colors were retired, at the sound of "plena" music, San Juan Company Soldiers celebrated until late hours.

Sunday morning, as awardees packed and made room for their rewards, and everyone was checking out from the resort, the main conversation was about how close the race was between the two local companies.

A margin of basically a contract made the difference for the top company.

Meanwhile, everyone was well aware that the new fiscal year was already upon them and the challenge was just beginning.

As any recruiter will recognize — The mission is never over!



Courtesy Photo

**San Juan Company with their Top Combined Volume Company Award. The San Juan recruiting Company has consistently performed above expectations.**





# Feliz Navidad, Feliz Año Nuevo and Feliz Día de Reyes

The people and organizations who supported Buchanan throughout the year display community pride.



Photos Marc McCormick

(Above) Reminding us why we are here, Army Community Services offers their tribute to our servicemen during the annual Fort Buchanan Christmas parade.

(Left) The Department of Public Works put on a show. Stopping in front of the grandstand, department personnel revved up the crowd with a traditional Puerto Rican salsa song.



Garrison sister services and civilian units participated in the parade such as the Sector San Juan Coast Guard above and the Naval Support Command Caribbean Division Cadets below.



A popular destination for arrivals to the garrison, El Caney Lodge provides great facilities for visitors including the season's most special guest.



Members of the Fort Buchanan BOSS program (Business Opportunities for Single Soldiers) supported the parade and handed out treats to the children lining the street.



DFMWR staged the Christmas event including live performances. Pictured above the band Plenealo entertains the visitors. Middle, Guests from on and off garrison attend the celebration. Pictured are — (left to right) Reggie Bradshaw, Jefferey Foster, Ellie Huertas, Rafael Fuentes, Gladys Rivera and Norberto Santana. Right, members of the Military Vehicle Preservation Foundation added a touch of WWII re-enacting famous personalities from the era.





# Fort Buchanan celebrates open of holiday season



(Above) Marines, from the Marine Corps Reserve, display their banner featuring the USMC Toys For Tots collection effort. Each year the Corps raises money to help less fortunate children during the Christmas season. The Marine Corps has conducted the event each year since 1947. The entire proceeds from money contributions and GIK go for children's benefit.



(Right) Members of the 1st Mission Command Color Guard led the 2008 annual Christmas parade at Fort Buchanan.



Photos by Marc McCormick

Leading the parade — Command Sergeant Major David Davis (left), assisted by the elf like Sgt. 1st Class Richard Arroyo and Master Sgt. William Russell, tow Fort Buchanan Commanding Officer (center) Col. Edwin C. Domingo, The Adjutant General of Puerto Rico David Carrión-Baralt (left) and 1st Mission Support Command representative Col. Eric Bermudez to the parade reviewing stand Dec. 5, 2008.



Col. Edwin C. Domingo, commanding officer, Fort Buchanan, with a little help from his friends, light up the garrison's Christmas tree Dec. 5, 2008.



The Municipality of San Juan was kind enough to provide Santa Claus a ride to the garrison giving his reindeer a little rest.



Assistant Club Manager Georgie Anderson (right) worked with employees of the Community Club to provide great food to the people attending the garrison Christmas celebration. Pictured are (left to right) Veronica Jograj, Lisaidy Adorno, Johanna Rosa, Stephen Hurley and Roberto Garcia.



(Above) Pictured left to right are three of the supporters of the Christmas activities. DES Police Chief Vicente Gonzalez, Capt. Tomás Acosta and DFMWR's Mara Clemente. Clemente was the primary organizer of the event. As usual for all public events, DES provided for the safety and security for the many hundreds of people who came to the garrison. The event was incident free because of all the dedicated professionals from DES.



Students representing Antilles High School show their school spirit by marching in the Christmas parade.





# 2008 El Morro & Fort Buchanan in Review

## EL MORRO

January '08



Marc McCormick

**Fort Buchanan's Water Spout celebrated its 10th anniversary with a cake cutting presided over by the garrison commanding officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo. Along with children attending the water park and the staff of the Water Spout, new manager Jenny DeVanna (to the right of Col. Domingo), wife of Buchanan's veterinarian Capt. Justin DeVanna.**

## Pentagon Federal Credit Union victim of daylight robbery

El Morro Staff

December 7, 2007 was a day of infamy for Fort Buchanan. The Pentagon Federal Credit Union on post was robbed by a suspected Army Reservist.

FBI Special Agent in Charge of Puerto Rico, Luis S. Fraticelli, said, "Due to the security measures and the prompt closing of the garrison, they were contributing factors to solving the case."

Department of Emergency Services, Chief Raymond Johnson, also said, "We understand that the security at Fort Buchanan is adequate and we will not make any significant changes to our security policies."

A suspect was apprehended the following morning at 3 a.m. and was arraigned and released on bail to await further judicial proceedings. Special Agent Fraticelli said, "We feel it was one guy acting by himself even though the investigation is continuing."



Leo Martinez

**Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo answers reporters questions following the robbery of the Pentagon Federal Credit Union. The incident was investigated and a suspect identified by the San Juan office of the FBI. Island Special Agent in Charge Luis Fraticelli, right, reported on the FBI's involvement.**

## February '08 New AAFES Shopette



Marc McCormick

**After a very long wait, the new AAFES Shopette finally opened. In operation for a month before the "official" opening, the gasoline operation posted over a million dollars in sales pumping more than 12,000 gallons of regular a day. Above right the commanding general of AAFES, Brig. Gen. Keith L. Thurgood; Trish Jones, Shopette Manager and Commanding Officer Fort Buchanan Col. Edwin C. Domingo, cut the ribbon at the opening. In his remarks, Col. Domingo noted, "Last fiscal year AAFES contributed over \$230 million to Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs worldwide."**

## Moratorium lifted — construction starts

El Morro Staff

On Monday, January 28, President Bush signed the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008. The Act authorizes funding for the defense of the United States, for military construction and for national security-related programs. Section 2876 of the new law repeals the construction moratorium mandated by Congress in 2001.

What this means for Fort Buchanan is that we can now start working on many projects that had been kept on hold. This includes much needed improvements to our infrastructure and the construction of new facilities not only by us but also by other federal agencies who wish to relocate to Fort Buchanan.



Marc McCormick

## Family Covenant signed March '08

El Morro Staff

With the signing of the Army Family Covenant at our Community Club, local Army leadership, personnel, support organizations and family members formally recognized "the commitment and increasing sacrifices that our Families are making every day," and committed themselves to fully supporting the Families and to "provide them with a quality of life commensurate with their service and with a strong, supportive environment where they can thrive."

That solemn commitment was not forgotten after the ink dried on the many signatures and the finger print on the hand imprints left by our children on the document.

The entire Fort Buchanan community has rallied behind the cause. Long-standing programs have been expanded and reinforced. Initiatives have sprung everywhere in support of our Soldiers and their families.



Leo Martinez

**(Left to right) Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Félix Santoni; The Adjutant General of Puerto Rico Brig. Gen. David Carrión; Commanding General 1st MSC Brig. Gen. David S. Elmo and the Commanding Officer Fort Buchanan Col. Edwin C. Domingo signed the Army Family Covenant Nov. 6, 2007 as part of an Army wide commitment to Soldiers and their families. Fort Buchanan and Puerto Rico continue to lead in efforts to support Soldiers and their families.**



Marc McCormick

**Members of the Child Development Center and Fort Buchanan Volunteer Services all came together for their annual appreciation dinner at the Community Club. They were honored for their contributions to the community. "The hours they contribute, to a whole host of projects and activities, realize a great savings of time and money for the garrison," said Col. Edwin C. Domingo, commanding officer, Fort Buchanan.**





## April '08 Davis becomes garrison sergeant major

El Morro Staff

Since the retirement of Command Sergeant Major Alberto Vélez in 2006, Fort Buchanan has operated without that most important position being filled.

Since taking command of Fort Buchanan last June, Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo interviewed and then selected Command Sergeant Major David Davis to be the garrison's top enlisted Soldier.

Command Sergeant Major David Davis assumed the responsibility of Post Command Sergeant Major, U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico in April 2008 following his assignment as First Sergeant, Headquarters & Headquarters Company, 3rd Medical Command, Fort Gillem, Georgia. He is Fort Buchanan's first Active Guard Reserve Command Sergeant Major and the first AGR "Combat Medic" ever promoted directly to Command Sergeant Major from the rank of First Sergeant.



**CSM David Davis**

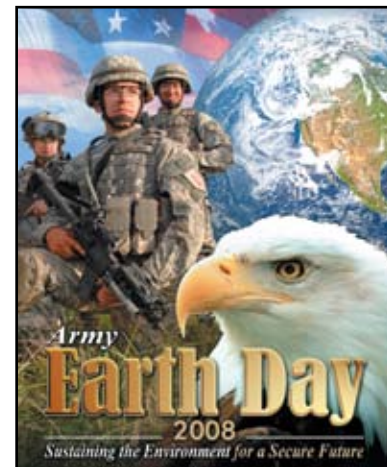
## Garrison celebrates Earth Day '08

Anibal Negron  
Environmental Division

Army Earth Day is celebrated every year in April at approximately 200 major commands, installations and organizations in the continental United States and around the world.

On this Earth Day, we remind ourselves that, while we remain Army Strong to ensure the defense of this great Nation, we must also remain good stewards of our environment to preserve it for future generations.

Sustainable practices such as water conservation, greater fuel efficiency, and use of renewable energy allows our Army to travel farther, deploy longer, and reduce dependence on traditional supply lines and reduce our impact on natural resources.



## May '08 Holocaust remembered



Marc McCormick

**David Bayer, guest speaker for Fort Buchanan's Holocaust Remembrance Observance, recounts his experiences to Col. Edwin C. Domingo, commanding officer, Fort Buchanan, prior to speaking to garrison employees about his internment by the Nazis during World War II.**

Marc McCormick  
El Morro

Ironically, there was a television series in the 50's that began with the phrase - "There are a million stories in the Naked City and this is one of them."

World War II encompassed, popularly, 6.5 million stories. That's the amount attributed to the number of Jews killed by the Nazis during the war. The true total will never be known. And, also, for the historical record, the number of Gypsies, Poles, Russians and other groups totalled well over 30 million; we think.

## Soldiers, civilians take to the streets for Armed Forces Day Fun Run

Marc McCormick  
El Morro

It was a perfect day for running as servicemen and women and civilians gathered together in front of the Fort Buchanan Welcome Center for the annual garrison 2.5K Armed Forces Day Run.

In his opening remarks, Col. Edwin C. Domingo, commanding officer, Fort Buchanan, said, "I want to thank you all for being here today in this demonstration of solidarity, fraternity and support for all the men and women who are so magnificently dedicated to serving their country."



Leo Martinez

**The Armed Forces Day Fun Run is led by the command group and Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo (left) and Command Sergeant Major David Davis (right). Participants from the Reserves, National Guard and other military and civilian organizations participated in the 2.5K run.**

## June '08 233rd Army birthday

Col. Edwin C. Domingo  
Garrison Commander

"Two hundred and thirty-three years ago, the United States Army was established to defend our nation. From the Revolutionary War to the Global War on Terror, our Soldiers remain Army Strong with a deep commitment to our core values and beliefs. This 233rd birthday commemorates America's Army - Soldiers, Families and Civilians - who are achieving a level of excellence that is truly Army Strong both here and abroad."



Leo Martinez

**are joined by the garrison commanding officer and the garrison command sergeant major David Davis in cutting the Army's 233rd birthday cake.**

**Army tradition - the oldest Soldier stationed at the garrison, Chap. (Lt. Col.) Rafael Rodriguez (left) and the youngest Soldier, Spc. Tiffany Roman (second from right),**

## Memorial Day observance begins with silent walk

Marc McCormick  
El Morro

Fort Buchanan celebrated Memorial Day with the annual Prayer Breakfast at the Community Club. The observance was attended by distinguished guests including veterans of World War II, Korea, Vietnam and all the actions involved in the Global War on Terrorism. The event each year marks the formal recognition, and thanks, for the veterans who have dedicated their lives in service to our nation. During the ceremony, veterans from previous service were asked to stand and be recognized.

**Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo (right) leads a procession of participants of the annual Prayer Breakfast to the Community Club.**



Marcos Orengo

**Brig. Gen. Hector Pagan, deputy commander, U.S. Special Forces Command and (seated center), Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Félix Santoni, visited Soldiers of the Fort Buchanan CBCHO unit. The general addressed the Wounded Warrior's concern about future support services in Puerto Rico.**



Marc McCormick

## Retiree Appreciation

Marc McCormick  
El Morro

Each year the Department of Defense and the U.S. Army observes Retiree Appreciation Day.

It is an opportunity to provide information and updates on policies and programs that have significant impact on veterans' lives. This year, in keeping with the Fort Buchanan tradition, veterans were offered information and assistance from several community groups prior to the main briefing.



Marc McCormick





## July '08 4th of July commemorates independence, heroes



Marc McCormick

**Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo, with The Adjutant General of Puerto Rico Brig. Gen. David Carrión-Baralt (to his right) and Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Félix A. Santoni (to his left), along with help from a few of the garrison's friends, cut the celebratory 4th of July cake.**

**Col. Edwin C. Domingo**  
Ft. Buchanan Commanding Officer

The anniversary of America's independence is a day of gratitude, and a day for celebration. Today, we count our blessings, and there are so many to count. We're thankful for the families we love. We're thankful for our freedom and opportunities, the freedom declared by our founding fathers, defended by many generations and granted to each one of us by Almighty God.



Marc McCormick

**This monument, with bronze plaque, was installed at the entrance of the newly renamed Spc. Frances M. Vega Gate at Fort Buchanan. Col. Edwin C. Domingo, commanding officer, Fort Buchanan and Vega's mother, Wanda unveil the monument as Vega's father Orlando, right and Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Félix A. Santoni pay honor.**

**Marc McCormick**  
El Morro

The 4th of July at Fort Buchanan began with a memorialization for Spc. Frances M. Vega. She was the first Puerto Rican female Soldier to die in the Global War on terror in Iraq. In his remarks, Fort Buchanan Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo said, "No ethnic group has greater pride in itself and its heritage than the Puerto Rican people."



Leo Martinez

**Fort Buchanan Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo pays his respect to Josefina Yambó, mother of Sgt. 1st Class Pedro A. Muñoz, during a posthumous presentation of the Silver Star to the family.**

**Col. Edwin C. Domingo**  
Garrison Commander

"Today is a historical day for the municipality of Quebradillas and for the family of Sgt. 1st Class Pedro Antonio Muñoz Yambó. Today we will posthumously present Josefina Yambó, mother of Sergeant Muñoz, one of the most important decorations of the United States Army – the Silver Star Medal," Col. Edwin C. Domingo said. Muñoz enlisted in the Army in 1986 at the age of 29.

## August '08 Cosme honored with dedication ceremony

**Marc McCormick**  
El Morro

"Master Sergeant (Ret.) Victor Manuel Cosme Russé, served in the U.S. Army from 1967 through 1988," that's the way the plaque began. The story is more than that.

On the 21st of August, family, friends, former co-workers, municipal officials and garrison employees met at the front of Bldg. 504, the Fort Buchanan Department of Logistics, to honor Victor Cosme-Russé by renaming the facility in his honor. DOL Director Jose L. Miranda offered remembrances of the time he spent with Cosme recounting Cosme's attention to duty, his warm friendship and Cosme's caring for his fellow workers. "Cosme reached out to everyone he knew and was especially remembered for always helping single Soldiers," Miranda said.



Marcos Orengo

**Fort Buchanan Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo presented the Victor Cosme-Russé family a remembrance poster following the renaming of the Department of Logistics Bldg. 504 in Cosme's honor.**

## Ft. Buchanan's Environmental Division spruces up garrison with tree plantings

**Members of the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources arrived at Coqui Gardens housing area of Fort Buchanan for a reforestation project. Three employees of PRDNER helped dig holes for thirty one trees they donated. The big kids participating in the tree planting at Coqui Gardens were – (left to right) Acting Director Fort Buchanan Environmental Division Aníbal Negrón, Eduardo Colón, Luis de Castillo, Héctor Serrano, Juan González-Rosa, and, from the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, Silkie Colón, Fernando Olmo and Luis Figueroa.**



Alicea Nevado

## September '08 Army Community Covenants highlight September



Photos Leo Martinez



**(Left) The Mayor of San Juan, Jorge Santini (second from right), signed an Army Community Covenant at Fort Buchanan's Community Club following Patriot Day activities. Brig. Gen. David S. Elmo, commanding general, 1st Mission Support Command and garrison commanding officer also signed the covenant. The event was hosted by Col. Edwin C. Domingo. (Middle) The Hon. José F. Aponte, President, House of Representatives and the Hon. Kenneth McClintock-Hernández, Presidente del Senado (center) along with other members of the Puerto Rico legislature sign the Army Community Covenant during a ceremony at San Juan's Roberto Clemente Coliseum Sept. 11th. (Right) Members of the Puerto Rican veterans community, including Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Félix A. Santoni; Luis R. Ramos, Puerto Rico Public Advocate for Veterans Affairs and Fort Buchanan Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo, sign an Army Community Covenant at Ramos Hall, Fort Buchanan, Sept. 16th.**





## October '08 **Army addresses critical lifestyle issues for Soldiers returning from deployment, members of families**

### Red Ribbon Campaign

**Myrna M. Llanos**  
ASAP Prevention Education

The Fort Buchanan Army Substance Abuse Program is helping to create awareness of the drug problems facing our community. Red Ribbon Week, Oct. 23-31, each year demonstrates our resolution to prevent both illegal drug use and the illicit use of legal substances. During this week, you are given the opportunity to stand up for a drug-free community by wearing or otherwise displaying a Red Ribbon prominently and participating in the various activities planned for that week.



Marc McCormick  
**Vito Guarino, Acting Special Agent in Charge, DEA Caribbean Division (right) gave the featured speech for Red Ribbon Week. Also attending was Luis Fraticelli, Officer-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (left). Col. Edwin C. Domingo, commanding officer, Fort Buchanan also addressed the attendees.**

### Suicide Prevention

**Marc McCormick**  
El Morro

Fort Buchanan recently embarked on an aggressive program to address an issue that has emerged from the Global War on Terror — suicide prevention. The U.S. Army is not statistically showing a large increase in suicide rates for the size of the Army, but the Army does take prevention of suicides seriously and is vigorously addressing the issue. One suicide that could have been prevented is one too many. All garrison's employees, as part of an Army wide outreach, have attended Suicide Prevention class. The purpose of the class is to educate civilian employees and military members on the warning signs that a Soldier may be contemplating suicide.



Marc McCormick  
**Gisela Aponte, Ft. Buchanan's Alcohol, Drug Control Officer, speaks with Master Sgt. William Russell about suicide prevention for Soldiers.**

## November '08 **Promotion to colonel — Valentin gets eagles**



Rosie Irizarry

**In the presence of family, friends, and the senior leadership of Fort Buchanan, Lt. Col. Manuel Valentin was promoted to full colonel in a ceremony Oct. 15, 2008. It's a family affair as Lt. Col. Manuel Valentin gets ready to receive his new eagles. Son Grant, wife Misty and daughter Lauren all take part in the ceremony.**

## No to Domestic Violence

**Wilda Díaz**  
Family Advocacy Program Manager

During the month of October the Family Advocacy Program observed the Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The first Domestic Violence Prevention Booth was held at the Buchanan exchange Oct. 2nd. More than 500 people visited the educational booth to receive information, pins, purple ribbons and educational material.



Marc McCormick

**Col. Edwin C. Domingo, commanding officer, Fort Buchanan, along with Antilles school system leadership and garrison representatives, marched in support of Domestic Violence Prevention.**

## Red Ribbon no to drugs

El Morro Staff

Military installations across the world have been plagued by the numerous problems associated with alcohol, tobacco and other drug use.

There is hope in winning the War on Drugs, and the hope lies in the hard work and determination of our community to create a drug-free environment.

Red Ribbon is a National Observance that occurs annually from October 23rd to 31st.

This nationwide celebration has become a major force for raising public awareness and mobilizing communities to combat alcohol, drug and tobacco use.



Marc McCormick

**Vito Guarino, Acting Special Agent in Charge, DEA Caribbean Division (right) gave the featured speech for Red Ribbon Week. Also attending was Luis Fraticelli, Officer-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (left). Col. Edwin C. Domingo, commanding officer, Fort Buchanan also addressed the attendees.**

## December '08 **Col. Aponte retires**



Leo Martinez

**Family, friends and professional colleagues in the Army and Puerto Rican community gathered together to honor Col. Margarita Aponte. She has finished 30 years of military service recognized by everyone as a model of professionalism, moral character and service of excellence. The guest speaker for the event, Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, director, Tricare Management Activity, presented Aponte with the Legion of Merit.**

## Noche Puertorriqueña

**Marc McCormick**  
El Morro

Each year Antilles High School celebrates Puerto Rican culture with Noche PR night at the high school.

Each year the students, faculty and parents put on an evening of music, entertainment and Puerto Rican foods and artisan wears to raise money for school activities for the school year.



Marc McCormick

**(Above) Guitarist and music teacher Rafael Sosa and 10th Grader Edwin Cruz perform specially arranged guitar songs for the audience at Antilles High School Noche Puertorriqueña**

## Mayor honors veterans

**Marc McCormick**  
El Morro

Fort Buchanan and the municipality of San Juan celebrated Veterans' Day November 13 and 14. Hosted by the Puerto Rico Departamento de La Familia y La Comunidad, the event was an opportunity to recognize the Veteran of the Year — Luis A. Arroyo, president, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands Federation Chapter 0252. Fort Buchanan Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo addressed the crowd saying, "Whether in war or peace, Soldiers have passed through the ranks of the Army in service to their country and look back on that with a sense of pride."



Marc McCormick

**Fort Buchanan Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo and San Juan Mayor Jorge Santini-Padilla hold up an Army Community Covenant that symbolizes the commitment by the municipality to Soldiers and veterans during a ceremony held at the San Juan Municipal Center which recognized the Puerto Rican Veteran of the Year.**





# People & personalities visit Fort Buchanan are



Rep. Solomon P. Ortiz (D-Texas) (third from right) and Rep. Madeleine Z. Bordallo (Delegate Guam) visited Puerto Rico. They were provided briefings by Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo; Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Felix Santoni (far right); Department of Emergency Services Chief Raymond Johnson (left) and the Deputy to the Garrison Commander Gunnar Pedersen.

Leo Martinez



Dr. Carmen Arroyo, second from right, meets with Col. Edwin C. Domingo, commanding officer, Fort Buchanan, along with (left) Michael A. Gould, superintendent DDESS VA/NY/PR; and (far right) Richard Skinner who served as interim superintendent prior to Dr. Arroyo's appointment.

Marc McCormick



(Top) Wife Angeline Viruet, Lt. Col. Angel A. Viruet, son Anthony Viruet, daughter Dorangley Viruet with children Soleil, Gernagley and Alondra proudly stand with Col. Edwin C. Domingo following Viruet's promotion ceremony. Viruet is Fort Buchanan's Inspector General.

Marc McCormick



Col. Barrye L. Price, commanding officer, Eastern Sector, Military Entrance Processing Command, receives thanks from Col. Edwin C. Domingo, commanding officer, Fort Buchanan for being the guest speaker at the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. observance held at the Community Club.

Leo Martinez



The commanding general of AAFES, Brig. Gen. Keith L. Thurgood; Trish Jones, Shopette Manager and Commanding Officer Fort Buchanan Col. Edwin C. Domingo, cut the ribbon opening the new Shopette & Gas Station. In his remarks, Domingo said, "Last fiscal year AAFES contributed over \$230 million to Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs worldwide."

Marc McCormick



Patricia J. Walker and Col. Edwin C. Domingo, commanding officer, Fort Buchanan, exit a command briefing about the installation. Walker is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Materiel and Facilities Deputy. At Fort Buchanan as the guest speaker for Women's History Month, Walker also took interest in the garrison infrastructure and upcoming projects.

Marcos Orengo



Puerto Rico Resident Commissioner Luis Fortuno and Rep. (Mass.) Patrick Kennedy visited Fort Buchanan to receive a briefing about garrison operations and discuss proposed upcoming construction plans. Representative Kennedy sits on the House Armed Services Committee.

Marcos Orengo



Command Sergeant Major David Davis assumed the responsibility of Post Command Sergeant Major, U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico in April 2008 following his assignment as First Sergeant, Headquarters & Headquarters Company, 3rd Medical Command, Fort Gillem, Georgia. He is Fort Buchanan's first Active Guard Reserve Command Sergeant Major.

Army Photo

Maj. Gen. Charles Groton, commanding general, 81st Regional Support Command, helped present federal service certificates to Fort Buchanan employees.



Jose Lopez

Brig. Gen. "Butch" Tate, commanding general, The Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School talks about Soldiers and their families in the modern Army.



Marc McCormick

Brig. Gen. Peggy Wilmoth, commanding general, 332nd Medical Bde., presided over the 407 Medical Company's deployment to Iraq in March 2008 in Ramos Hall, Fort Buchanan.



Marc McCormick

Maurice Buchanan, chief of staff, IMCOM-SE, was the guest speaker at Fort Buchanan's Black History Month observance. Buchanan spoke about Black historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson.



Marcos Orengo

## Hello & Goodbyes in '08

Fort Buchanan has experienced a large staff turnover in the last two months. We have gained, and, sadly, lost some garrison employees.

- José Pagán, Public Affairs Officer, is retiring with 30 years of federal service.
- María "Mimi" Richa, management analyst, is retiring after 33 years of service.
- Lt. Col. Mark Nozaki, Fort Buchanan Staff Judge Advocate, is being rotated to his next assignment. The garrison will miss the expertise and fidelity they have brought to the job.



Lt. Col. Mark No-



Jose Pagan



Mimi Richa



Orlando Negron



Jose Ortega



Ramon Rivera

On the bright side, the garrison has gained 3 new employees, who bring many years of experience to Fort Buchanan.

- Orlando Negrón will be the new face in the Resource Management Office. Directly down the hall from RMO, DPT-MS has gained the services of Jose Ortega. Ortega comes to us following a stint with the Puerto Rico National Guard. Ramón A. Rivera is the newest addition to the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center.





# —military, civilian and Puerto Rican notables



**The Hon. José F. Aponte, President, House of Representatives and the Hon. Kenneth McClintock-Hernández, Presidente del Senado sign the Army Community Covenant during a ceremony at San Juan's Roberto Clemente Coliseum Sept. 11th.**

Leo Martinez



**The Mayor of San Juan, Jorge Santini, signs an Army Community Covenant at Fort Buchanan's Community Club following Patriot Day activities as Brig. Gen. David S. Elmo, commanding general, 1st Mission Support Command, looks on.**

Leo Martinez



**(Left) Brig. Gen. Donald M. Bradshaw, commanding general, Southern Medical Command, congratulates Col. Manuel Valentín on his promotion to full colonel following the administration of the Officer's Oath of Office.**

Rosie Irizarry



**Brig. Gen. Héctor Pagán, deputy commanding general, U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, visited Soldiers of the Fort Buchanan CBCHO unit. The general addressed the Wounded Warrior's concern about future support services in Puerto Rico.**

Marc McCormick



**Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo met with Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, Archbishop for the Military Archdiocese for the Military Services, during a visit to Puerto Rico and Fort Buchanan. The Archbishop spoke with the Catholic chaplains assigned to the garrison.**

Marc McCormick



**Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo, left, welcomed Brig. Gen. Francis L. Hendricks, deputy commanding general, Army, Air Force Exchange Service, to the garrison. The garrison and AAFES continually observe and adjust business practices for customer satisfaction.**

Marc McCormick



**Brig. Gen. Blake E. Williams, center, met with Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army Maj. Gen. (ret.) Félix A. Santoni and Fort Buchanan Commanding Officer Col. Edwin C. Domingo. Gen. Williams is the Deputy Commanding General First Army East Division.**

Marc McCormick



**Vito Guarino, Acting Special Agent in Charge, DEA Caribbean Division (right) gave the featured speech for Red Ribbon Week. Also attending was Luis Fraticelli, Officer-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (left). Col. Edwin C. Domingo, commanding officer, Fort Buchanan also addressed the attendees.**

Marc McCormick



**Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, director, Tricare Management Activity, presided over the retirement of Col. Margarita Aponte and awarded Aponte the Legion of Merit.**

Leo Martinez



**Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Félix A. Santoni accepted the reappointment as Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army for Puerto Rico for two more years Sept. 25, 2008. The appointment lasts until Sept. 2010.**

Courtesy Photo



**Rev. (Col. Ret.) Larry Racster was the guest speaker for Fort Buchanan's Patriot Day ceremony honoring the victims of Sept. 11th.**

Leo Martinez



**Joaquín Pedrón, Visual Information technician, (right) and Gerardo Campos (left) play the feature song and name of their album, "Con la Televisión," during a television performance in San Juan.**

Courtesy Photo



# PRimeros Year in Review

## January '08 — Puerto Rico logistics unit takes on larger role at Hohenfels, Germany

Charlie Reed  
Stars & Stripes

**Hohenfels, Germany** — The Army Reserve's 210th Regional Support Group prides itself on switching gears quickly and efficiently.

The Puerto Rico-based logistics unit put its skills to the test during a two-week stint at the Army's Multi-national Training Center that ended Friday.

Shortly after arriving late last

month, the 210th's mission changed. Originally responsible for providing logistical support for 250 U.S. and Russian soldiers, the unit was then asked to tackle the needs of more than three times as many troops training at the expansive base in rural Bavaria.

"That's what makes a logistics unit a successful one. What we learned is that it's important we remain flexible," said commander Col. Héctor López. "And in that regard, we're going back to Puerto Rico with confidence."

*(Right) Brig. Gen. David S. Elmo, commanding general, 1st Mission Support Command, Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, vigorously shakes the hand of Russian Col. Somolyuk, Brigade Commander, Infantry Regiment, that worked closely with the 210th Regional Support Group in their logistical support mission for the bilateral U.S.-Russian exercise, TORGAU 2007, held at Hohenfels, Germany.*



Capt. Anthony John

## February '08 — 268th Transportation Co. deploys



Photos Capt. Anthony John

*(Above) David Jose, two-year old nephew of Sgt. Rubén Rodríguez, forklift operator, 268th Transportation Company, 2nd Detachment, renders a honorary salute to all the 268th TC Soldiers after participating in Family Day held at Ramos Hall, Fort Buchanan.*

*2nd Lt. Jason González, Platoon Leader, 268th Transportation Company, 2nd Detachment, is held by his wife, Janetsse Colón as she lets him know that he will be missed.*



## March '08 — 65th RRC becomes 1st MSC

*1st Mission Support Command CSM Marcial Félix and Brig. Gen. David S. Elmo, commanding general, 1st Mission Support Command, unfold the new 1st MSC flag at the recent Re-flagging Ceremony held at the El Morro Fortress in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico on Feb. 1, 2008. Pictured in the rear is the highly decorated 1st MSC Color Guard whose members are — Sgt. Debora Zamora, Sgt. 1st Class Jorge Jimenez, Sgt. 1st Class Ulyses Marrero, Sgt. 1st Class Genaro Melendez, Staff Sgt. Luis Melendez, Staff Sgt. Wilbin Colón, and Staff Sgt. Luis Torres.*



Photos Capt. Anthony John



*Many Generals from the 65th Reserve Readiness Command, now the 1st Mission Support Command, were present at the Re-Flagging Ceremony held at El Morro Fortress Feb. 1, 2008. (Left to right) In attendance were Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Antonio Rodríguez Balinas (July 14, 1973 - July 4, 1980), Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Augusto Gautier (July 24, 1980 - July 23 1984), Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army Félix A. Santoni (July 24, 1984 - May 20, 1987), Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Edgardo González (July 19, 1987 - August 18, 1991), Maj. Gen. Paul E. Lima (April 3, 1995 - March 30, 1999), Brig. Gen. (Ret.) José M. Rosado (April 2, 2002 to May 7, 2006) and Brig. Gen. David S. Elmo (May 8, 2006 to present).*

## April '08 — 1st MSC wraps up Tradewinds 2008

Capt. Anthony John  
1st MSC PAO

Lt. Col. Lizette Brown, assistant Command Surgeon, 1st Mission Support Command, as part of her 5-day Media Cooperative tour promoting Tradewinds 2008 exercise, her Dominican Republic heritage and women in the U.S. Army Reserve, was interviewed by radio Station FM 92.5; Nueria Piera Show; television stations Channel 7, S.I.N. TV News Broadcast, Channel 11 — Divertido con Jochy Show, and Channel 45 — La Hora de Consuelo;

El Caribe and El Día newspapers and the magazine Mujer Unica.

Working with the staff of the U.S. Embassy in the Dominican Republic, the 5-day Media Cooperative was a success in promoting the host nation's, Dominican Republic partnering with the United States and 18 Caribbean nations focusing on Disaster Relief, Humanitarian Assistance, Civil Affairs, Mass Casualty Evacuation and Personnel/Venue Protection and Internal Security.

Approximately 500 U.S. Servicemembers will participate in the exercise.

*Consuelo Dispradel, host of the Dominican Republic Channel 45 TV Show "La Hora de Consuelo," was nearly brought to tears as she accepted the "Garita" patch from 1st MSC's Lt. Col. Lizette Brown at the completion of their 30-minute TV interview. She presented the Garita patch making Consuelo Dispradel an Honorary Member of the Garita family, "Los PRimeros."*



Capt. Anthony John



# PRimeros Year in Review

## May '08 — 100th USAR Birthday

**Capt. Anthony John**  
1st MSC PAO

“Building our Future while Honoring our Past,” Almost 100 years to the date and among much fanfare, the 1st Mis-

sion Support Command hosted their long awaited and anticipated Army Reserve 100th Birthday Soldier's Ball at the Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico Community Club on April 19, 2008.



Photos Capt. Anthony John

(Above) CSM Marcial O. Félix, 1st Mission Support Command; Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Antonio Rodríguez-Balinas, first commanding general, 65th Regional Readiness Command; Pfc. Keysha Lee Sosa Torres; and Brig. Gen. David S. Elmo, commanding general, 1st MSC, celebrate the Army Reserve's 100th Birthday by cutting the ceremonial cake for the occasion. (Right) Lt. Col. Patricia Day-Moore, commanding officer, 969th Quartermaster Detachment, presented Brig. Gen. David S. Elmo, commanding general, 1st Mission Support Command, a commemorative coffee cup that was designed while the unit was in Iraq.

## June '08 — 1st MSC — Army Community of Excellence

**Capt. Anthony John**  
1st MSC PAO

Five winners were honored May 8, 2008 for being the best in the Army as winners of the 2008 Army Communities of Excellence competition. There were the special category winners including then 65th Regional Readiness Command headquartered at Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico.

The team members responsible for making this award possible are Col. Jesus Gálvez, Lt. Col. Lucilla Ibarra, Lt. Col. Frederick Vázquez and Command Sergeant Major René Rivera. Special category winners both received checks for \$750,000.



Photos Capt. Anthony John

Gen. Richard A. Cody, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, presents the \$750,000 representative check to Brig. Gen. David S. Elmo, commander, 1st Mission Support Command (formerly the 65th Regional Readiness Command), for winning the Army Community of Excellence Award in the Special Category for being the best in the U.S. Army Reserve. Holding the accompanying trophy is Command Sergeant Major Marcial O. Félix. Col. Jesus Galvez, team leader of the group responsible for putting the winning packet together, stands next to Maj. Gen. John A. McDonald, Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Army Installation Management Command.



Sgt. Antonio Antunez Francisco, 271st AG (Postal) Company is greeted by his wife and children. Francisco and his company just returned from an Iraqi deployment.

## July '08 — 1st MSC units win Combined Logistics Excellence awards

**Capt. Anthony John**  
1st MSC PAO

Army Award for Maintenance Excellence Program was established in 1982 by the Department of the Army to recognize exceptional accomplishments in unit maintenance across the full spectrum of Combat Arms, Combat Support, and Combat Service Support units. This is the 25th year that the program has been running.

The National Defense Industrial Association sponsors the program on an annual basis where the Army Chief of Staff or a designated representative presents the AAME plaques to the 12 winners and 12 runners-up for their superior maintenance operations. Among the winners was Puerto Rico. The objectives of the AAME Program are to — Improve and sustain Field maintenance readiness. Assess the maintenance component of unit readiness. Improve efficiency and reduce waste. Recognize outstanding maintenance accomplishments and initiatives. Ensure the best units compete.



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Front Row (left to right) — Master Sgt. Vicente Vázquez, maintenance sergeant from Cieba, Puerto Rico, 346th Transportation Battalion; CW2 José Rivera, maintenance technician from Salinas, Puerto Rico, 264th Collection and Classification Company; 1st Lt. Geoffrey Piller González, commander, 346th Transportation Company Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment; CW3 Orlando DeJesús, company commander, 264th C & C Company; CW2 Milton Peña, property book officer, 346th Transportation Battalion; Spc. Andrea Rodríguez, supply sergeant, 264th C & C Co. Supply. Back Row (left to right) — Staff Sgt. Edwin Morales, maintenance sergeant, 264th C & C Co.; Master Sgt. Williams Cruz, senior maintenance sergeant, 166th Regional Support Group; José Pizarro, maintenance controller, 1st MSC; CW3 Roger Wright, maintenance technician, 1st MSC.

## August '08 — 1st MSC honors veterans



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Sgt. 1st Class Jason Cedeño (Ret.), who served in World War II, Korean War and the Vietnam War, was presented a plaque of appreciation for his service by Col. Eric Bermúdez, Chief of Staff, 1st MSC, during a remembrance ceremony held at the Casa del Veterano located in Juana Díaz, Puerto Rico.



# PRimeros Year in Review

## September '08 — Family members attend retreat

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1st MSC PAO

During a “Retiro para el Enriquecimiento Matrimonial” ceremony hosted by the 1st Mission Support Command’s Chaplain’s Office, 35 couples representing the rank of Private First Class to Colonel, participated in the Strong Bonds event held at the Rincón of the Seas Grand Caribbean Hotel, Rincón, Puerto Rico from August 1-3, 2008.

Capt. Wanda Acevedo, one of the 1st MSC’s Chaplains, stated, “This retreat gives tools of communication and problem solving that married couples can use in their day to day lives.”

Sgt. 1st Class Juan Bruno, 1st MSC Chaplain NCOIC, says a healthy family plus a healthy Soldier equals the Strong Bonds needed in today’s military.



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*Staff Sgt. José A. Castro, 1st MSC’s Chaplain’s NCOIC, hands a rose to AGR Staff Sgt. David A. Wheeler, a native of Seattle, Washington, a human resources sergeant stationed at Fort Lawton, Washington, which he will in turn use to rededicate his marital vows to his lovely wife of four months, Noraida M. Wheeler, of Carolina, Puerto Rico.*

## November '08 — 210th RSG adopts “Garita” heraldry

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1st MSC PAO

Having the foresight to ensure that the revered “Garita” would be enshrined in history, Col Héctor López, commanding officer, 210th Regional Support Group, with his staff support, was able to design into his unit’s crest the Garita with all its symbolism. All the Soldiers of the 210th RSG lives the motto, “Gaurdians of Freedom.” The unit insignia was approved by the Institute of Heraldry, Department of the Army on April 8, 2008.

The El Morro tower, an icon of Puerto Rico, signifies defense, strength, and the Group’s resolve to provide logistics and maintenance support operations to all units within their area of operations. The Sentinel’s Tower, the Garita, has always been linked to the military tradition of Puerto Rico since 1510 and reflects the



military character of always being alert and vigilant to defend freedom. It also represents the military strength and preparedness of the U.S. Army Reserves in Puerto Rico.



*Sgt Joshua J. Troche, paralegal NCO, 174th Legal Support Organization attached to the 1st Mission Support Command, answers some preparatory questions posed by director Bennett Miller in preparation for filming a television commercial promoting the Army Reserve.*

Capt. Anthony John

## October '08 — PRimeros — Panamex & Renacer exercises, plus homecoming & Soldiers honored for service.



Photos Capt. Anthony John



*(Top left) Netya Pérez and daughter Jadia Morales show how happy they are to have Spc. Jose Morales of the 125th Military Police Detachment back after his deployment. (Top right) During the Sept. 11, 2008 Medalla Defensores de la Libertad sponsored by the Asamblea Legislativa de Puerto Rico, Wanda I. Rodriguez, mother of fallen Soldier Cpl. Estrada holds her son’s picture above her head.*



*(Bottom right) Spc. Nelson Pagán, 301st Military Police Company, receives his completion certificate from Coronel de Infanteria DEM Miguel Angel Pérez López, Comandante del Comando Regional de Entranamiento de Operaciones de Mantenimiento de Paz, CREOMPAZ, Coban, Guatemala for his participation in Panamex 2008. (Bottom left) Lt. Col. Antonio Martínez, physician, 369th Combat Support Hospital, performs a medical evaluation on a Dominican Republic Soldier during training of Renacer 2008. Col. Ileana Fernández, chief nurse, 1st MSC Command Surgeon’s office, assists.*



## December '08 — MROC stands up

**Capt. Anthony John**  
1st MSC PAO

With a mission to mobilize trained and ready U.S. Army Reserve units to perform general military service to the National Command Authority and to augment the active component, the Mobilization, Readiness and Operations Center formerly known as the Emergency Operations Center and the Mobilization and Readiness Division, stood up in with a team of 23 Soldiers and Civilians with Lt. Col. Héctor Morán commanding the unit. This includes operations above or below the threshold of war, as directed by higher headquarters.



Capt. Anthony John

*Active Guard and Reserve/ Civilian members of the Mobilization, Readiness and Operations Center pose in front of the 1st Mission Support Command’s foyer as a means of introducing themselves to the command. Pictured are — (Front Row) Master Sgt. Celso Rodríguez, Master Sgt. Luis Colon Carbo, Lt. Col. Héctor Morán, Chief of the MROC, Lt. Col. Raimundo Figueroa, Maj. Benito Pérez, Capt. César Rodríguez. (2nd Row) Sgt. 1st Class Walter González, Master Sgt. Eric Colón Adjudar, Sgt. 1st Class Jorge Jimenez, Staff Sgt. Luis Melendez. (Last Row) Staff Sgt. Victor Polanco, Staff Sgt. Berenisse Rodríguez, Juan Bobe, Staff Sgt. Mariam Díaz, Sgt. Leslie Cortés. TPU Soldiers not shown are Maj. Félix Rios, Maj. Juan Quintero, Maj. Vincent Jackson, Capt. Héctor Orsini, Capt. Edna Flores, Sgt. First Class Carlos Nieves, Sgt. Luis Berdecia, and Sgt. Josue Ortega.*